DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 379 391 UD 030 319

TITLE	Invisible Walls: A Study of Racial Division and the Challenge of Building Bridges of Understanding in the St. Paul, MN Area Schools.
INSTITUTION	People for the American Way, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	65p.
AVAILABLE FROM	People for the American Way, 2000 M Street, N.W., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036 ($6.95 members; $7.95 nonmembers; make check payable to People for the American Way).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; *Intergroup Relations; Interviews; Program Development; *Public Schools; Questionnaires; Racial Bias; *Racial Relations; *Secondary School Students; Social Class; *Teachers; *Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	Focus Groups; *Saint Paul Public Schools MN

ABSTRACT

This is a report of a 6-month study of race relations in three public schools in the Saint Paul (Minnesota) metropolitan area. The study is intended to be the first phase of an attempt to improve intergroup relations and the social climate in Saint Paul, Roseville, and South St. Paul schools. Based on 154 interviews, 10 focus groups, and a written questionnaire completed by 1,576 students and 591 teachers, the study provides a composite portrait of intergroup relations and related issues in the 3 school districts. It cites program areas that should be developed as the beginning of a broad strategy to build more effective school communities. Teachers and students indicate that the schools are marked by deteriorating race relations, with high rates of racial harassment (54 percent of students complain), and only a tenuous peace. Students are divided along race and class lines, and feel little sense of community. Recommendations for a new broad strategy call for better leadership, mobilization of school and community leaders, and development of program models that are presently effective on a smaller scale. Five graphs present study findings. Both student and teacher questionnaires are attached. (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 379 391

People For
the
American
Way

INVISIBLE

A Study of
Racial Division
and the
Challenge of
Building Bridges
of Understanding
in the
St. Paul, MN
Area Schools

UD030319

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sanford D. Horwitt
People for the American Way

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

"...out of school...I hang around with my own ra

"When I think of tolerance I think of okay, I'll just stay away fr

if you stay away from me

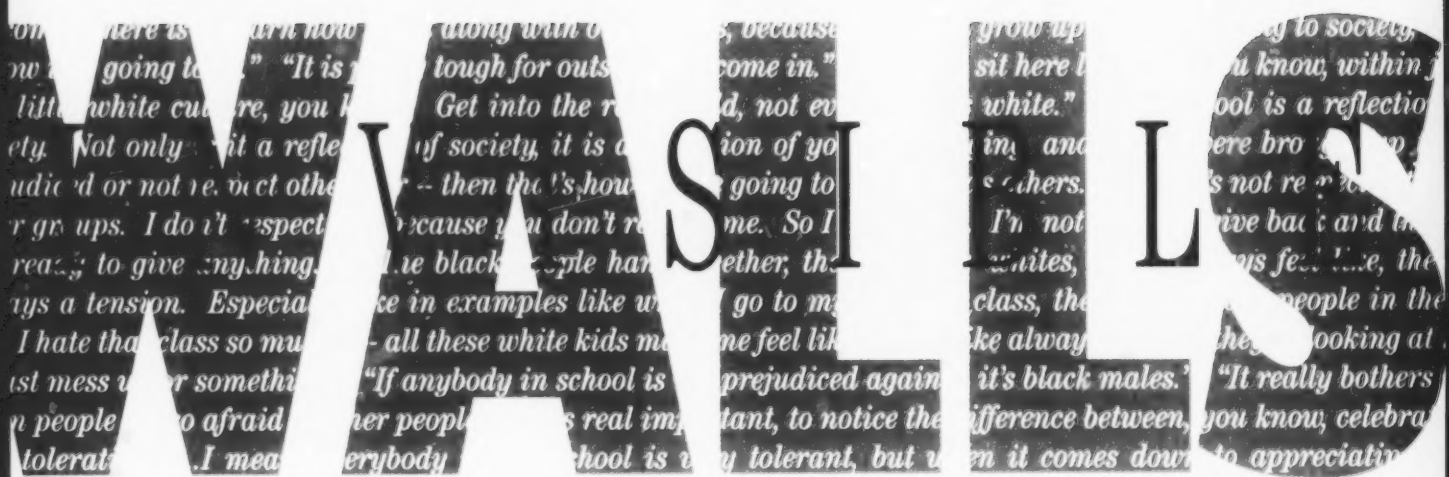
I don't respect you because you d

ect me.

"People are different...they are going to have conflicts.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

People For
the
American
Way



A Study of
Racial Division
and the
Challenge of
Building Bridges
of Understanding
in the
St. Paul, MN
Area Schools

People For the American Way is a 300,000-member, nonpartisan constitutional liberties organization.

A publication of
People For the American Way
2000 M Street, N.W.
Suite 400
Washington, D.C. 20036

Copyright 1994 by
People For the American Way
All rights reserved

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For their generous support of this project,
People For the American Way
gratefully acknowledges,
The American National Bank and Trust Company
The St. Paul Companies
Ruth B. Usem
and
The Otto Bremer, Deikel Family,
Fingerhut Family,
Grotto, and Archie D. & Bertha H. Walker Foundations

We also want to thank the
National Education Association
for its assistance in compiling and analyzing the survey data,
and
Debby Klingender
for providing many valuable ideas and suggestions.

Finally we would like to express our appreciation to
all the teachers, administrators, school staff,
students, parents, and
other members of the community who participated in the
interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a report of a six-month study of race relations in three public school districts in the Saint Paul metropolitan area. The study, which has relevance for schools throughout the country, is intended to be the first phase of an attempt to improve intergroup relations and the social climate in the Saint Paul, Roseville and South St. Paul schools.

This study has national implications. The disturbing findings mirror deteriorating race relations across the nation, particularly tensions in the schools. The insights and conclusions in this report can provide guidance to school officials nationwide on how to understand and address the similar issues in their areas.

Based on 154 interviews, 10 focus groups and a written questionnaire, which was completed by 1,576 students and 591 teachers, the study provides a composite portrait of intergroup relations and related issues in the three school districts and cites program areas that should be developed as the beginning of a broad strategy to build more effective, inclusive school communities.

In a number of respects, the portrait that emerged was troubling. Among the findings:

• **Deteriorating race relations**. Eight out of ten teachers and administrators who were interviewed believe intergroup relations are "getting worse" not only in their schools, but also in the Saint Paul area and nationally. In focus group discussions, when students were asked to rank the degree of tolerance at their school on a scale of 1-to-10, the average of all groups was only a "5."

• **High rates of harassment.** Fifty-four percent of the students said that they had been called names or insulted because of their race, ethnicity or gender. Fifty-two percent of the teachers report they have experienced negative remarks by students because of their race, ethnicity or gender.

• **A tenuous peace.** Although there is an apparent surface calm in the schools, many believe that tensions simmering below the surface could erupt into overt conflict at any time. Many students commented that they could 'feel' or 'hear' this atmosphere.

• **The lack of a sense of community**. Students tend to be divided along racial, ethnic and, to a certain extent, class lines. Complaints of unequal treatment, both positive and negative, were widespread.

• **Contrasting experiences and the racial perception gap.** There are many areas where different groups experience school life differently or do not see eye to eye. Sixty-four percent of African Americans, 45 percent of Asians and 38 percent of Hispanic students report experiencing unfair treatment, compared to only 14 percent of white students. Forty-eight percent of African American students believe that teachers tolerate poor behavior by white students, contrasted to 18 percent of white students who share that perception.

The study highlights key elements of a new, broad strategy to improve the social climate and intergroup relations.

• **Leadership that recognizes the importance of the problem and is committed to implementing solutions.** The key to the success of this effort is effective leadership that understands the ambivalence and fears associated with racial, ethnic and other differences but will not shrink from the urgent task of building new bridges of understanding and respect.

• **The mobilization of school and community leaders.** School districts need to find the will, determination and political leadership to map out and implement a new strategy to improve the social climate and, in the process, enhance learning opportunities for all students.

• **The development of certain program areas that could serve as the basis of a broad strategy for improving intergroup relations and social climate**. There is no shortage of good program models in the Saint Paul area, but they are not part of a larger, coherent strategy. The challenge is to organize and administer programs in such a way that there is a clear connection to the goal of improving intergroup relations.

INTRODUCTION

This report is the culmination of a six-month study, the first phase of an innovative attempt to improve intergroup relations and the social climate in Saint Paul metropolitan area public schools. Working with the Saint Paul, South St. Paul and Roseville school districts, People For the American Way has provided a composite portrait of the social climate and attitudes on race, ethnicity and related matters in the three school districts. The report also cites a set of program areas that can form the basis of a new, effective strategy for improving the intergroup relations.

This report is based on interviews, focus groups and written questionnaires that were conducted in the three school districts during the six-month process that began in March 1994. People For the American Way staff interviewed more than 150 school administrators and staff, school board members, students, parents and other community members. More than 100 high school students participated in 10 focus groups — 90-minute discussions with 10-12 students each. A broad range of students participated, including African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, Native Americans and whites, as well as students of different socio-economic backgrounds. Finally, 1,576 high school students, mostly sophomores, completed the written questionnaire, and a similar questionnaire was completed by 591 teachers. All those interviewed or participating in the focus groups were told that they would not be quoted by name or otherwise identified in this report. Similarly, the students and teachers who completed the written questionnaire did so anonymously. Although the focus of this report is mainly on high schools, the implications for the rest of the schools are clear, and serious work to improve the social

climate and intergroup relations should begin as early as elementary school.

The composite picture that emerges is both clear and troubling. Even though there are significant demographic differences among the three school districts — e.g., the 1993-94 enrollment of students of color was 49 percent in Saint Paul, compared to 12 percent and seven percent in Roseville and South St. Paul, respectively — they share serious problems when it comes to intergroup relations. In each school district, many people believe that intergroup relations, social climate and tolerance and respect for people of different backgrounds fall far short of the ideal. And in each school district, there are many thoughtful people who are concerned that intergroup tensions simmering below the surface could erupt in overt conflict at any time. When teachers and administrators were asked whether they thought intergroup relations were getting better, getting worse or staying about the same, eight out of ten said "getting worse" not only in their schools, but also in the Saint Paul metropolitan area and nationally. Perhaps that is why a strong majority of teachers, according to the questionnaire results, believes that "teaching mutual respect and tolerance" should be a high priority for their school system.

When teachers and administrators were asked whether they thought intergroup relations were getting better, getting worse or staying about the same, eight out of ten said "getting worse" not only in their schools, but also in the Saint Paul metro area and nationally.

Currently, however, such teaching is not a high priority in any of the three school districts. Each district has one or more "programs" designed, at least in part, to address the goals of respect, tolerance and better intergroup relations. But these efforts, as well as ad hoc activities by some principals and teachers, tend to be limited in scope and without district-wide impact. Nonetheless, some of these efforts could represent a starting point for a new strategy, one that is not only district-wide, but includes

some shared programs across school district boundaries. The latter is an important element — an important symbol — if school leaders are serious not only about inculcating students with the values of tolerance and respect, but also about educating the larger community. Indeed, the key to the success of this effort is leadership. There is no shortage of good programs, including some cited in the final section of this report, that can comprise the beginning of a comprehensive strategy. The bigger challenge is to find effective leadership that understands the ambivalence and fears associated with racial, ethnic and other differences but will not shrink from the urgent task of building new bridges of understanding and respect.

The first meeting of Saint Paul metropolitan-area school officials and representatives from People For the American Way occurred shortly after People For published *Democracy's Next Generation II*, a landmark study of young people and their views on race relations. Conducted during a period of rising racial tensions across the country, the study was designed to learn more about the attitudes, experiences and expectations that 15- to 24-year-olds bring into the larger society as they become adult citizens. The picture that emerged was mixed — there were reasons for some optimism but also great concern about the country's future when it comes to race and intergroup relations. On the one hand, many young people reported having friendships with peers of different races, and a majority believed it is possible — and desirable — for the United States to become a truly racially integrated society. On the other hand, there was a serious perception gap — and resentment — between racial groups over the issue of who is more likely to be discriminated against when it comes to

college admissions or job opportunities, and many young whites clung to negative and sweeping stereotypes of African Americans.

There are new strains and challenges in our increasingly diverse society, a diversity that is especially visible in many city and suburban school classrooms. The purpose of *Democracy's Next Generation II* was not only to encourage a national dialogue about race and intergroup relations, but also to stimulate new initiatives and programs, especially in schools. One of the study's key findings was that many young people had never been asked in school or at home to examine their own feelings, attitudes and prejudices about people from different racial or ethnic backgrounds. Many prejudices, it was discovered, were based on unspoken assumptions and images derived from second-hand sources of information, such as the media. When People For the American Way presented these and related findings to urban public school superintendents from across the country at a meeting of the Council of the Great City Schools, virtually all the superintendents agreed that their school districts needed to do a better job of addressing issues of intergroup relations, tolerance and the social climate. In fact, they all agreed that these issues, linked as they often are to the problem of school violence, were among their greatest concerns.

Among the superintendents expressing concern was Dr. Curman Gaines of the Saint Paul Public Schools. Dr. Gaines convened a meeting of school officials from his district, neighboring Roseville and other Saint Paul suburbs to discuss People For the American Way's proposal to develop a pilot program that could be replicated nationwide. Later, Saint Paul and Roseville were

joined by the South St. Paul Public Schools; the school boards of each district supported a six-month study to assess the state of intergroup relations and social climate and to suggest how they could be improved. From the start, People For the American Way believed it was important for city and suburban districts to join together in the planning process. In addition to exploring how bridges of understanding might be built in one school or in one school district, there was agreement that it was important to open up the possibilities of bridge-building across geographical boundaries in the metropolitan area.

A TENUOUS PEACE

"*Today was great, but I don't know about tomorrow.*" — High school principal.

On a typical day in high schools in Saint Paul, Roseville and South St. Paul, there will be no violent clashes between students of different races; there will not be a disruptive classroom confrontation sparked by a racial slur. But the absence of overt conflict does not indicate that all is well; to the contrary, there is a widespread sense among students, teachers and administrators that a blow-up could occur at any time. In a focus group discussion at a Saint Paul high school, an African American student said, "...[T]here's tension. When you walk down the hall, you can hear it." In Roseville, a veteran teacher who was asked to rank the degree of racial tolerance on a scale of 1-to-10, said, "I'd give it a six, but it could collapse to zero if there were an incident." In South St. Paul, a high school student echoed the views of others when he said, "I know for sure that a lot of my friends who are minorities in the school get a lot of...verbal abuse from other kids," abuse that could lead to an altercation. Another student, talking about the tightly-knit eastern European neighborhoods that have defined South St. Paul, said, "It's pretty tough for outsiders to come in" and be accepted.

"...[T]here's tension. When you walk down the hall, you can hear it"

— African American student

Student responses to the questionnaire reinforce the picture of a less-than-hospitable high school climate across the three districts. When asked about actual incidents of bigotry, 54 percent said they had been called names or insulted because of their race, ethnicity or gender, and 50 percent said they knew someone who had been physically attacked for the same reasons. And it is not

just the students who have had these experiences. Fifty-two percent of the teachers report they have experienced negative remarks by students because of their race, ethnicity or gender, and 54 percent know students who have experienced physical attacks.

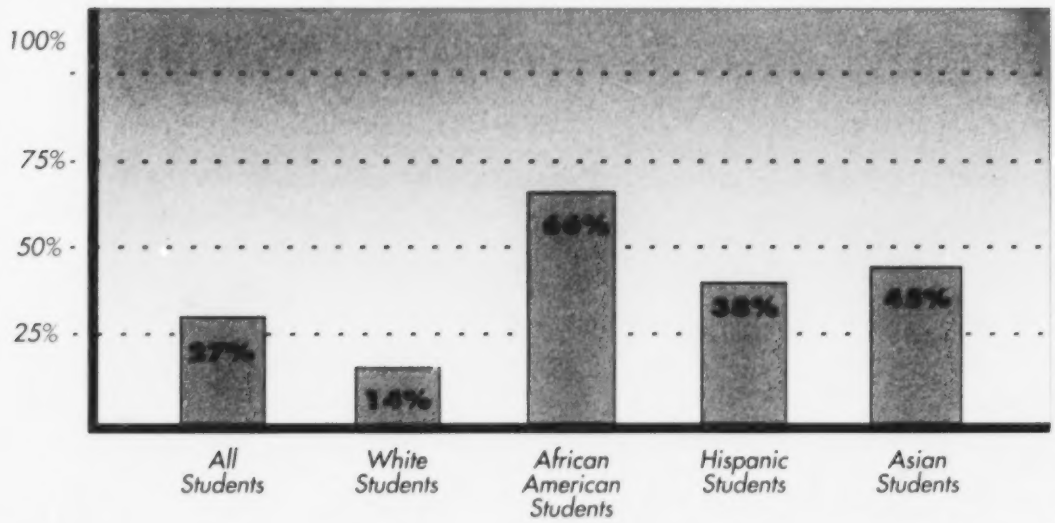
None of the three school districts is immune to incidents of hurtful, intolerant behavior. Questionnaire results show that 58 percent of the students in Saint Paul, 54 percent in South St. Paul and 41 percent in Roseville say they have been targets of gender, ethnic or race-related slurs at their school.

In the questionnaire, when students and teachers are asked to rate relations at their school between ethnic and racial groups, only 7 percent of the students and 12 percent of the teachers say they are "great." In the ten student focus group discussions, when students were asked to rank the degree of tolerance at their school on a scale of 1-to-10, the average of all groups was only a "5." A student who was disheartened about the state of intergroup relations at his Saint Paul high school said, "Well, I haven't seen fights between races, but I just don't think that the different races...communicate with each other a lot here." A Native American social worker who works with students who are about to enter high school said, "Native American students think it's more fun at elementary school. Cliques begin about 7th grade, and there's a lot more bias in secondary schools." And a Saint Paul student in a focus group discussion observed, "There is one thing that you can look at that proves the whole thing. Just go to the lunchroom every day; you got all the Asian people sitting down on the far end, and the white people sit over here and the black people sit over there." Although students report having friendships with people of other races or ethnic backgrounds, the

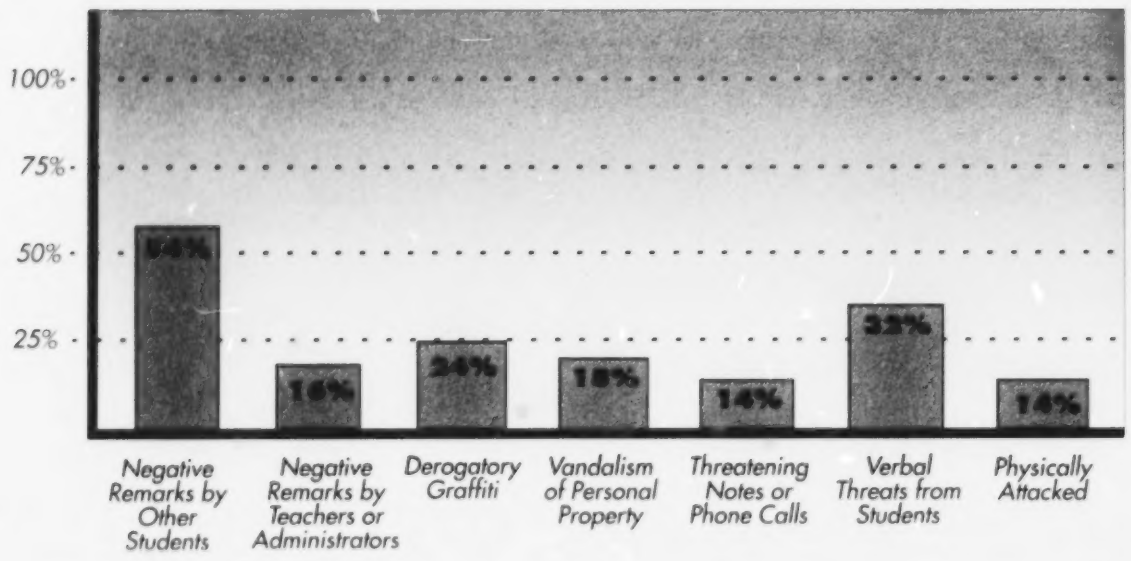
"Just go to the lunchroom every day; you got all the Asian people sitting down on the far end, and the white people sit over here and the black people sit over there."

— Student

Percentage of Students
Who Feel that They have been Treated Unfairly
Because of Their Race



Percentage of Students
Who Have, Because of Their Race, Ethnicity
or Gender, Experienced Harassing Behaviors at School.



predominant picture of the school building that emerges from interviews and focus groups is that students of different racial and ethnic backgrounds are, more often than not, the "closest of strangers."

The metaphor of the racially divided cafeteria is mentioned frequently in Saint Paul, but in South St. Paul and Roseville, where students of color represent a smaller percentage of the population, there are other images that suggest divisions along racial, ethnic, and social class lines. A South St. Paul high school administrator said there was a feeling that "if we just bulldozed the [low-income] housing, we wouldn't have a problem." In Roseville, a student focus group participant talked about subtle undercurrents in the high school. "Here...[students] like to talk to their friends about [minorities] and be quiet about it and not really let [their real feelings] be seen or heard, but...you feel the tension and know it's there."

The dividing lines are not always racial. For example, 64 percent of teachers agree with the statement that "class, rather than race, is the greatest barrier between people." A white elementary school principal sees "friendships form along socio-economic lines" at a very young age. A sizable minority of high school students, 37 percent, agrees with the statement that, "at my school, students separate into groups that have a lot of money and groups that don't have much money." In focus groups, some students talked about the interplay of race and class and the subtle consequences. A white student in a focus group said he sometimes sees other students in honor classes who "can't write an essay, and I think [they] are in class because they are white and middle class..." Conversely, another white student observed,

"There's no way in the world I'm going to believe that most minorities can't handle taking classes that are supposed to be harder." But at her school, relatively few students of color are in the honors classes, which leads to a sense of isolation and social distance. "In the [honors] program, it's just like a family, [but] we are completely sheltered from the rest of the school. And I think just because we are so sheltered...the school isn't a community."

Another troubling area of school life concerns sexual orientation. There is a widespread feeling that the social climate for gay and lesbian students is not very good. Thirty-nine percent of teachers believe their school's environment for gays and lesbians is negative, while 50 percent of students believe that discrimination against gays and lesbians at their school happens very often (31 percent) or fairly often (19 percent). These percentages for both teachers and students are considerably higher than they are for responses to similar questions about the social climate for racial and ethnic groups in the schools. In a Saint Paul focus group, a student said, "I think the school is real accepting of almost everybody, but when you start talking about homosexual and bisexual people, I think there is real big hostility." Another student in the group, who was less sanguine about the atmosphere at the school said, "If I were not heterosexual and white, I would be afraid to come here." In Roseville, a student characterized the prevailing attitude among his peers toward gays and lesbians this way, "It's just like, 'God, get away from me. You're sick. I might catch it.'"

"In the [honors] program, it's just like a family, [but] we are completely sheltered from the rest of the school. And I think just because we are so sheltered... the school isn't a community."

— Student

PERCEPTION GAPS AND OTHER OBSTACLES

To a significant extent, students of different racial and ethnic groups operate in different worlds when they're at school (and, after school, return to neighborhoods that are often worlds apart). Their perspectives are different, too — in fact, interviews, focus groups and questionnaire results reveal large, troubling perception gaps between white and nonwhite students in important areas of school life. The gap is especially dramatic between white and African American students. For example, 55 percent of African American students believe that white students in their school are given advantages — such as admission to certain programs and better teachers — over students of color. Only 14 percent of white students share that opinion.

Fifty-five percent of African American students feel that white students in their school are given advantages — such as admission to certain programs and better teachers — over students of color.

For students, parents and many teachers of color, their perception that students of color are treated as second-class is a source of frustration and anger. One African American parent said the anger that is sometimes acted out in school by African American students is related to the perception of unequal treatment. Another African American parent was unequivocal about the prerequisite to improving a school's social climate, "Equality is the key to [better] race relations," she said. And an African American student said, "I think that the expectations for the black people don't seem to be as high from the teachers...[T]here are a lot of minorities in this school who could do much better than they are doing. And some of it is their own fault, but some of it is that nobody is pushing them and saying, 'You can do this.'" A Native American educator believes that "Native American students pick up on low academic expectations...Sometimes they give up on trying to avoid the possibility of getting hurt." A sim-

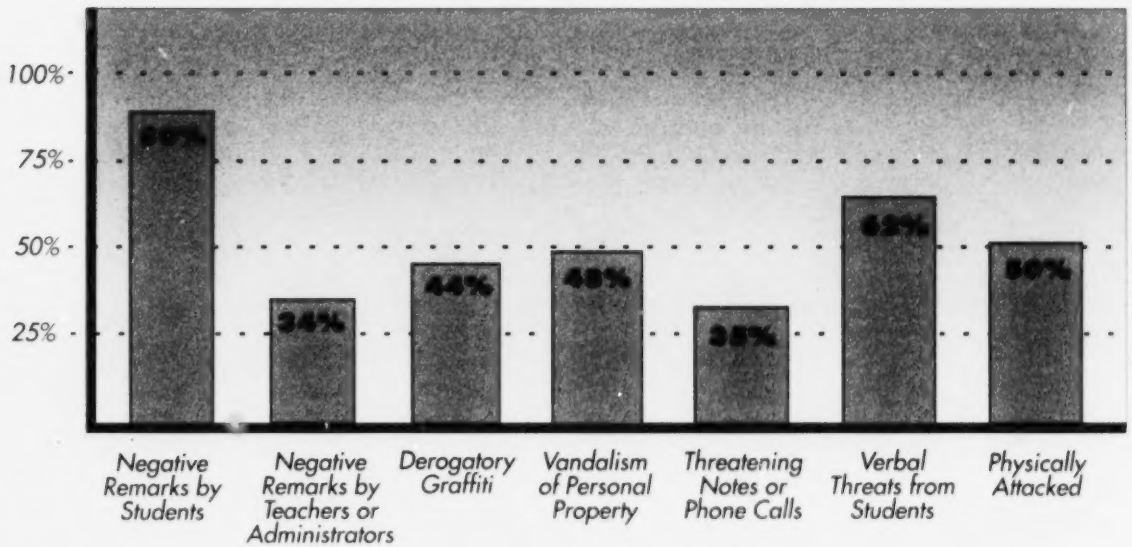
ilar perception was offered by a Hispanic high school student who remembers reactions he received when he talked about going on to college. "A lot of teachers treated me as though, `Why are you even going to try?'" And a Hmong parent in Saint Paul believes that there are lower expectations for Hmong children, that Hmong children are too often pigeonholed in English as a Second Language classes, and that they are kept in ESL classes long after they could be assigned to regular courses. "I don't have the data," she said, "but I think test scores [of the Hmong ESL students] won't match the test scores of mainstream students."

"They see the ESL students talking in Hmong, and then they would come up to you and sneer, and just kind of give you an icky look like, 'Listen, don't start yapping that language at me.' And that is a big stereotype [with some teachers], they come on to you with a different attitude."
— Asian student

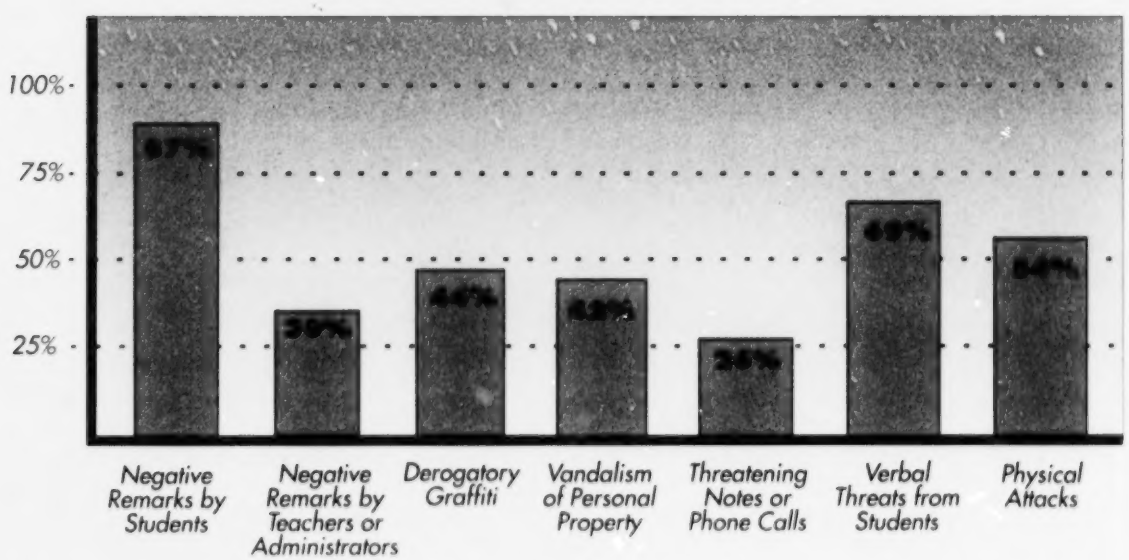
Closely related to the issue of equal access to good academic programs and good teachers is the issue of "fair treatment" by teachers. Here, too, there are different perceptions. Many students of color believe that because of their race, they have sometimes been treated unfairly by teachers. Sixty-four percent of African Americans, 45 percent of Asians and 38 percent of Hispanic students report experiencing unfair treatment, compared to only 14 percent of white students.

Among Asian students, unfair treatment is often associated with their English proficiency; many feel that teachers (and other students) assume that their English is poor, even before they speak. Explained one student, "They see you speaking Hmong, and they just give you a look. They come on to you with a different attitude. They might speak a little slower, or extra loud." In a Saint Paul focus group, a Hmong student talked about some teachers' attitudes toward ESL students. "They see the ESL students talking in Hmong, and then they would come up to you and sneer, and just kind of give you an icky look like, 'Listen, don't start yapping that language at me.' And that is a big stereotype

Percentage of Students
Who Know of Other Students Who Have, Because of Their Race, Ethnicity or Gender, Experienced Harassing Behaviors at School.



Percentage of Teachers
Who Know Students Who Have, Because of Their Race, Ethnicity or Gender, Experienced Harassing Behaviors at School.



[with some teachers], they come on to you with a different attitude." Another stereotype, in the view of a number of Hmong students, is that Asian students who get into a fight are often described in more sinister, dehumanizing terms than their white counterparts. As a Hmong student recalled, "[The principal] had mentioned at one of the PTSA [Parent Teacher Student Association] meetings that there was a fight this afternoon between poor white kids and some 'Asian gangsters.'"

Insensitivity or ignorance about cultural differences is mentioned frequently in interviews. A Native American educator says that "when teachers see that some Native American kids work slower and [are] quieter, they think they're not good students but that's not the case...[And] if a Native American student doesn't look up and make eye contact, some people think they're disrespectful. But just the opposite is true in their culture." A Hispanic teacher referred to the "shallowness of understanding" that exists among some of her non-Hispanic colleagues regarding the home life of Hispanic students, especially those whose parents don't speak English. A comment from an elementary teacher such as, "Be sure your mom reads to you tonight," can be hurtful and discouraging albeit well-intentioned.

"How can a teacher teach if she's afraid of our kids?"

— African American parent

In a school environment where there is a lack of trusting relationships or where students perceive mixed signals about their status and acceptance, what constitutes "unfair treatment" may be difficult for students to discern. This was illustrated in a Saint Paul focus group with African American students. One student told about a white teacher who seemed unusually zealous in notifying the student's other teachers or phoning his home when he missed assignments or was absent from class. At the end of his

account, the student said to the group, "I think she is just trying to get me in trouble." But he didn't sound entirely convinced of this explanation and, when another student in the group suggested that perhaps the teacher was simply being unusually tenacious and conscientious in helping him to be a better student, he agreed that that was another possible interpretation.

On the other hand, there are sharply different views on whether teachers tolerate poor behavior by white students. Among African American students, 48 percent believe that teachers do, contrasted to 18 percent among white students. A female African American student talked about receiving harsh discipline for wearing a hat in class, while a white female student with a hat was overlooked. "It's...a white thing," she said about such small but significant incidents in school. Even more typically, African American students talk about a double standard that applies to white students who populate the honors classes. The teachers' attitudes regarding these students, an African American student said with some sarcasm, is "'[T]hese are good students who never go to the office...They are just so angel-like. So when they act out, they think, oh, they're just having fun, whereas, you know, in the regular classes, these are bad students; these are the kids who are causing trouble in school." In Roseville, a racial epithet was written on the locker of an African American student, who was angry and disheartened when, in her view, it was not proclaimed loudly and clearly to the school, "Hey, this is not going to be tolerated."

A racial epithet was written on the locker of an African American student, who was angry and disheartened when in her view, it was not proclaimed loudly and clearly to the school, "Hey, this is not going to be tolerated."

Students' perception of a double standard or inconsistent behavior by school administrators can add to distrust and misunderstandings when it comes to race-related situations. In a focus

group with white students, there was a discussion about how white and African American students were sometimes treated differently in small but telling ways. As one student explained, "I've been walking down the hall, and there may be two black students walking behind me. I don't get stopped, but the administrator asks those two students for passes." But another student added that race alone might not be the only factor in such situations. "It's how you dress and your reputation."

But many white students also believe that poor behavior by African American students is often tolerated — it may not be the rule, but it is not unusual either, many white students say. "I have one class where this group of black kids, they will sit there and they will yell out swear words [but the teacher won't do anything]. Then there is a group of white kids...and, you know, like you can be reading a book for another class and all of a sudden you are being yelled at; you can be sent to the office." An African American parent in Saint Paul provides one possible interpretation, that many white teachers try to avoid disciplining black students because they're they're afraid of being labeled a racist, or because they are simply fearful, especially of African American males. "How can a teacher teach if she's afraid of our kids?" the parent wonders.

Is there the will, determination and political leadership to map out and implement a new strategy to improve the social climate and, in the process, enhance learning opportunities for all students?

THE CHALLENGE OF BUILDING NEW BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING

The superintendents of the Saint Paul, Roseville and South Saint Paul school districts participated in this study because they thought that finding new answers to improving their schools' social climate and intergroup relations was essential, not because they thought it would be easy. Like many other metropolitan-area public school districts, those in the Saint Paul area have experienced major demographic changes in less than a generation and those changes — more students of color, more lower-income families, more students at-risk — are likely to continue. In this new era, it is not only the old ways of teaching that must be re-examined, but also the old assumptions about school as a community in which individuals share similar experiences and world views. In the new era, a healthy school community must be created, nurtured and maintained.

There are three areas in particular that deserve serious consideration for improving the social climate and intergroup relations in Saint Paul, Roseville and South St. Paul:

• recognition that there is a problem that seriously affects the quality of education;

• mobilization of a broad range of school and community leaders who have the will to address the problem;

• development of a set of programs whose effectiveness will be closely monitored and measured.

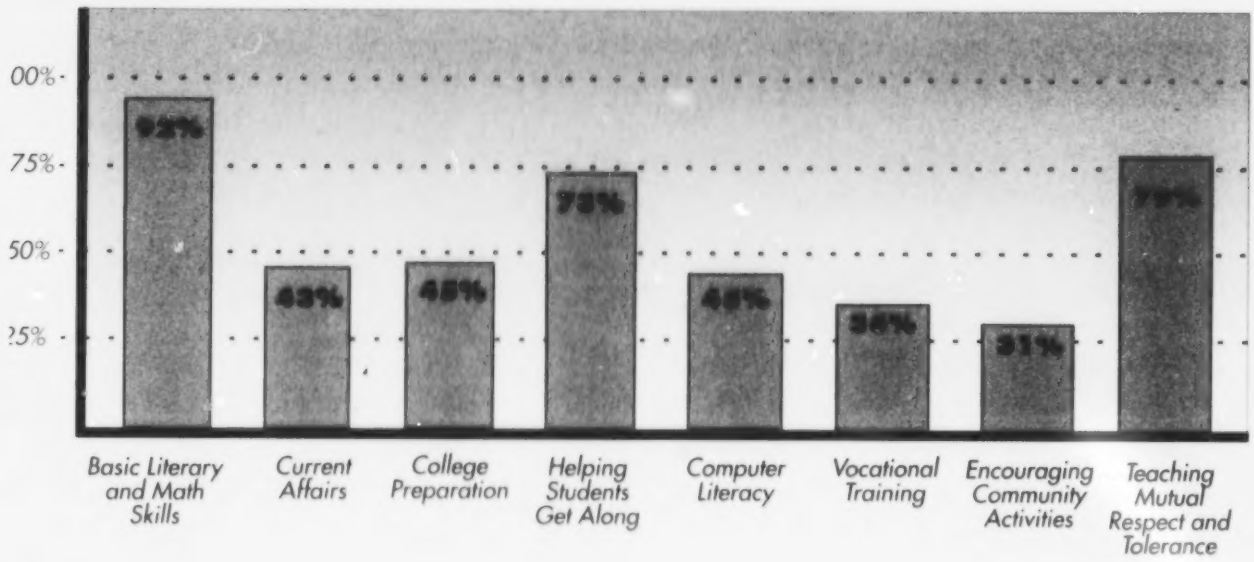
Recognizing the problem and its effect on education. Although this report documents a disturbing variety of intergroup tensions, misunderstandings and perception gaps, a straightforward observation by a Hmong parent captures why all of this is critically important if basic educational goals are to be achieved: "You have to feel accepted in the school, have your emotional needs met, to do well in class." To be sure, parents and the larger community have traditionally evaluated a school district's success by its academic program — or at least that part of it that lends itself to measurement by standardized tests. Less easy to measure, however, is the importance of the school's social climate. But as school populations become more diverse, the issues related to climate, tolerance and respect become more important. There is an emerging appreciation of this in all three school districts. For example, after considering a list of goals for their school system, more teachers assigned a "high priority" to teaching mutual respect and tolerance (79 percent) than they did for goals such as preparing students for college (45 percent) or computer literacy (45 percent). Only the goal of basic literacy and math skills received more high-priority support (92 percent).

"You have to feel accepted in the school, have your emotional needs met, to do well in class."
— Hmong parent

In short, there is an emerging appreciation of the importance of social climate and intergroup relations. The challenge now is for school and community leaders to move these issues from the margins to the center of the school districts' mission and academic program.

It should be noted that there are community leaders in the metropolitan area, most visible in Saint Paul, who believe that the issue of "equity" for low-income students and students of color is fundamentally important. Some of these leaders argue that if

Goals That Teachers See as "High Priority" for Their School System



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

there are not new and more effectively deployed resources to improve the academic outcomes for these students, then it will be difficult to make significant progress to improve school climate and intergroup relations. Students who feel they are being treated as second-class citizens are more likely to be angry and resentful, and invisible walls will continue to separate the academic "haves" and "have nots." This analysis suggests the importance of keeping in view the interrelatedness of school issues, while not diminishing the importance of finding workable solutions to specific problems.

Mobilizing school and community leaders. In all three school districts, there are a number of leaders — some in central administration, some in the community, others who are principals and respected teachers — who understand the new imperatives of an increasingly diverse school population and an increasingly diverse American society. Even in the South St. Paul and Roseville school districts, where the percentage of students of color is still relatively small, key school leaders know that change is on the way. A South St. Paul school board member said, "In the past, we assumed that we're all alike, but we're not." And a South St. Paul administrator who has worked in the system for more than two decades observed, "Whether we like it or not, intergroup relations has to be a priority. If students come to class upset, they won't learn." But a South St. Paul student was especially blunt, "We can't sit here learning, you know, within just this little white culture. Get into the real world, not everybody is white." In Roseville, where the percentage of students of color has nearly doubled over the last five years and more than 20 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-cost meals, a high-level

administrator says that while there is "denial" among staff that the school population is changing, some are "working their tails off" on diversity-related issues.

Nonetheless, a key question applies to all three school districts: is there the will, determination and political leadership to map out and implement a new strategy to improve the social climate and, in the process, enhance learning opportunities for all students? In the Roseville and South St. Paul districts, some leaders are wary of attitudes in their communities. Roseville's culture, one school official explained, "does not welcome differences." In fact, recently a number of students of color withdrew from the Roseville school district. South St. Paul does not welcome "outsiders," a number of students and administrators noted in interviews. How to reconcile the tensions and cross currents in these situations is in large measure a matter of will and leadership.

This also applies in the Saint Paul school district where we see in high school cafeterias that integration is often a myth. "[There's] a lot of lip service to race relations, but not much is happening," said an African American administrator. It has apparently crossed the minds of more than a few people that a "strategy" for keeping the peace in school buildings is to leave well enough alone: as long as racial and ethnic groups remain largely apart, there is less likely to be open conflict. But that is not the prevailing view; more typical is a sense of powerlessness and defeatism. In interviews with administrators and teachers, eight out of ten said intergroup relations were getting worse in their schools. "I've been trying for 26 years," said a white Saint Paul teacher, who can't easily explain why more progress in race relations has not been made. And it's not only veteran staff who may

need to be inspired. It was especially troubling to hear a number of students suggest that they had no vision of a more inclusive community where people learn from and respect each other. "If there was any way to have [real integration], we would have done it by now," said an African American student. And an Asian student, in commenting on the racial divisions at his school, said, "That is just how it is, and I don't think it's ever going to change."

If a new strategy for improving race relations is to have a chance to succeed, school and community leaders must have the will and determination to make it happen. All of the forces against change, including inertia and limited resources, will make this a formidable challenge.

Developing a set of programs. In Saint Paul, Roseville and South St. Paul, there are a number of "programs" or activities that could serve as the basis for a broad strategy to improve the social climate, promote tolerance and respect among students from different racial backgrounds and, in the process, enhance learning.

For example, parent involvement is increasingly cited as a critical factor in improving a student's academic success, but there also can be other important benefits. At a Saint Paul elementary school, where parent involvement was a high priority, parents of Hmong and African American students began to develop friendly relationships when they began to share common ground and work together at the school. To the extent that parents of different backgrounds gain a better understanding of each other through such programs, there is a chance that these attitudes will be passed on to their children at home, reinforcing other bridge-building attempts in the classroom.

Currently, however, programs aimed at improving intergroup relations are small, often limited to one or just a few schools; or, if they are district-wide, they tend to involve only a relatively small number of teachers and students. Furthermore, these well-intentioned efforts often are not perceived as part of a larger, coherent strategy. In short, in none of the three districts is there a critical mass of programs to promote intergroup relations that could provide an overarching sense of shared purpose and, ultimately, significant and measurable results.

Thus, one major challenge is to organize and administer programs, whether new or expanded, in such a way that there is a clear connection between them. Based on the results of the teacher questionnaire and interviews with staff, students and community members, there are three program areas that could serve as the basis of an emerging strategy to improve intergroup relations and achieve related goals.

Curriculum and Staff Development

Questionnaire results show that 68 percent of teachers think there should be more emphasis on multicultural education and training. However, in interviews with teachers and others, it is widely acknowledged that currently there is little systematic use of a multicultural curriculum to teach tolerance and promote better intergroup relations. Whether these topics and values are taught is, for the most part, dependent on the preferences, priorities and capabilities of individual teachers. A Roseville middle school teacher, who every Friday leads a class discussion after reading stories and poems about different cultures and races, thinks that colleagues avoid such efforts to supplement the stan-

dard textbooks because they are uncomfortable with the topics of race and diversity. "They're terrified of saying something wrong, of getting a [bad] reaction," the teacher said. Another related problem is that individual teachers are often so isolated from each other that sharing information and inspiring colleagues too often doesn't happen. A Saint Paul high school teacher, who has developed his own prejudice-reduction curriculum and has been teaching it for many years, said in an interview, "I don't know if this is what anyone else does."

In the long run, one of the most important ways to improve the prospects for multicultural education and intergroup relations is to hire teachers of diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds who demonstrate an interest and commitment to it. But even now, there is reason to believe that more teachers — perhaps many more — would incorporate race and culture into their lesson plans if they were better trained and inspired by a strong show of support from their school and district leadership. An overwhelming majority of teachers — 90 percent — who completed the questionnaire believe that an effective way to improve intergroup relations in their schools is to have classes that teach students about other cultures.

There is reason to believe that more teachers — perhaps many more — would incorporate race and culture into their lesson plans if they were better trained and inspired by a strong show of support from their school and district leadership.

It should be noted, however, that some of the strongest advocates of multicultural education have been extremely disappointed with the lack of effective teaching and classroom results. In all three school districts, staff development in this area has been limited. In Saint Paul, one of the more visible and well-regarded programs, Who Are We?, is staffed by only one part-time employee. The program is small — not everyone who wants to participate can — and it is voluntary, further limiting its poten-

tial reach and impact. In each school district, staff development money also tends to be scattered rather than focused on collective priorities. For many, "staff development" is viewed as an opportunity for individual teachers to pursue their own, specialized professional interests rather than as a vehicle for working toward school-wide and district-wide goals. If the curriculum is going to be used more effectively to promote respect, tolerance and intergroup relations, there will have to be a corresponding reappraisal of the use of staff development resources in each school district.

Creating More Shared Experiences

When asked for an example of a school program that helps to improve intergroup relations, a number of students cited activities such as theatre, band and choir, and team activities such as debate, Odyssey of the Mind, and athletics. In fact, these co-curricular and extracurricular activities may offer some of the best possibilities of bringing students from different backgrounds together. As a Saint Paul teacher observed, "I'm convinced that the only way we'll ever have tolerance is to have people do things together in a positive way." And a Roseville administrator noted, "It's a heck of a lot easier to dislike someone you don't know." It's an observation that is widely shared. "We have to help kids learn about each other," a South St. Paul teacher said. "We should be helping kids get past first impressions."

That is one of the primary goals of the highly regarded theatre program at Saint Paul's Central High School, where every year students of different backgrounds work together and learn about each other. Through a series of trust-building exercises and weekly reflections, as well as an emphasis on productions with

"I'm convinced that the only way we'll ever have tolerance is to have people do things together in a positive way."

— Teacher

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

themes of diversity, violence and resolving differences, students have the opportunity for positive interaction across racial, social class and academic boundaries. Perhaps the most important drama that occurs in this theatre program is the students' discovery of their shared humanity. As lofty as it may sound, this program uses an established methodology that could be replicated in every high school if there is the energy and commitment to do so.

As for greatly expanding other shared-learning experiences, according to questionnaire results 78 percent of teachers believe that school-based community service programs will help to improve intergroup relations, and 77 percent say the same is true for exchange opportunities between students of different backgrounds.

Seventy-eight percent of teachers believe that school-based community service programs will help to improve intergroup relations.

Among the three school districts, Saint Paul has the most extensive community service program. The community education department provides resource specialists to help teachers at all grade levels design and implement effective service-learning experiences. Fresh Force, now in its sixth year, is staffed by a full-time coordinator. Last year, more than 650 Saint Paul students — primarily from middle schools and high schools — participated in Fresh Force service projects that ranged from tutoring to environmental clean-ups to nursing home visits. The main focus of Fresh Force has been on service and learning-by-doing. Less explicit attention has been given to the potential for improving intergroup relations — for example, while many of the service activities are done by student teams, the teams may or may not be comprised of students from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. It would not take much to strengthen this aspect of Fresh Force, and one would have to look no further for a suc-

cessful model than to Saint Paul's Humboldt High School. For more than 20 years, a teacher there has quietly developed a program that is ostensibly about community service but, at least as importantly, he recruits students from different racial, ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds for the explicit purpose of learning about each other. This low-cost effort is a classic example of how imaginative, determined leadership — not just money — is a prerequisite for improving intergroup relations.

As for exchange programs, during the past four years the Roseville and Saint Paul school districts have engaged in a variety of cooperative activities. The impetus for these was a proposal, still under consideration, to build a school that would be jointly administered by the two districts and that would be a part of a metropolitan-area voluntary school integration strategy. Thus for many, the prime purpose of Saint Paul-Roseville student, teacher and parent exchanges was to establish positive relationships and experiences, share them through media coverage with other Roseville and Saint Paul residents and, in so doing, lay the groundwork for community acceptance of a jointly-administered school.

A detailed analysis of the last fours years' worth of work between Roseville and Saint Paul was beyond the scope of this report, but further investigation is warranted as the cooperative effort turned out to be something of a paradox. There was much activity — an official report published in 1993 says over 9,000 students and 5,000 adults participated in a large array of joint endeavors ranging from class exchanges to field trips and cultural awareness programs.

Many of the most successful Roseville-Saint Paul activities could be replicated as part of a new or related initiative that includes a major public relations and media component.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

But, apart from the participants themselves, there was very little awareness or apparent interest within the larger community. It seems that the Saint Paul-Roseville Joint Integration Project gave only limited attention to publicizing student exchange activities — and, consequently, Saint Paul metropolitan area residents learned almost nothing about the positive experiences that occurred. For this report, a review of local newspaper coverage revealed only two articles about the joint activities over a four year period. Moreover, interviews with otherwise informed administrators and teachers in the two school districts revealed, with few exceptions, that even they were not aware of the scope and nature of the program.

All three school districts could benefit by sharing their experiences with conflict resolution programs.

It is as if many stones were thrown into the water, but there were few ripples. This unfortunate result should not diminish interest in revisiting the value of student, parent and teacher exchanges between city and nearby school districts. Many of the most successful Roseville-Saint Paul activities could be replicated as part of a new or related initiative that includes a major public relations and media component.

Conflict resolution training and dialogue on race relations

Among the teachers who responded to the questionnaire, an overwhelming majority (87 percent) believe that conflict resolution training would be either very helpful (50 percent) or somewhat helpful (37 percent) in improving intergroup relations in their schools. The strong support is, perhaps, based less on first-hand experience with the efficacy of conflict resolution programs, which are not yet widespread, than it is on a deep concern for finding practical ways to address racial tensions and increased

youth-violence in the Saint Paul area – violence that is by no means limited to conflicts between different racial groups.

In each of the three school systems, the development of conflict resolution training is still relatively new, the implementation in schools and classrooms uneven. In Saint Paul, for example, much of the early work has been carried out at one of the six high schools. Like other students who were interviewed, an African American student there gave an enthusiastic account of her experience with conflict resolution and a related peer mediation class, stressing both the important life skills that are learned and possible benefits to her school. "You are going to learn the techniques of how to deal with...big, everyday problems. So maybe the class should be required for everybody to take. Maybe that [also] would relieve some of the problems that we have in our school."

Elsewhere in Saint Paul, the fate of conflict resolution training and implementation seems to be based largely on the interest or lack of interest of the principal and staff at each school. Recently at an elementary school, the principal, who was strongly committed to an in-service program in conflict resolution training, took it upon herself to secure a foundation grant because there was not enough money available in the staff development budget.

In South St. Paul, there are plans to expand a conflict resolution program that is used in the seventh grade. In Roseville, there is a beginning, district-wide effort to train staff in conflict resolution methods. The principal of the middle school attributes, in part, a reduction in fights and racial incidents to a new peer

mediation program — 120 students went through a training conducted by an outside consultant. And at Roseville Area High School, a smaller number of students participated in a similar after-school program. All three school districts could benefit by sharing their experiences and building on the most successful elements and approaches.

Related to conflict resolution and peer mediation are other programs that focus explicitly on prejudice reduction. In the questionnaire, 76 percent of teachers think classes designed to discuss issues of bias and prejudice would help improve intergroup relations. In both Saint Paul and Roseville, there has been a specific day — a "Diversity Day" or a "Respect Day" — when an entire high school has focused on bias, prejudice and the overall school climate. Typically, such day-long forums were organized in response to an incident of racial conflict or violence. As a symbol of a school's concern, one-time or annual events can be useful, but they are no substitute for ongoing, frequent opportunities where students and teachers can talk about issues of race, tolerance and intergroup relations.

Many students voiced support for such classroom activities. "We need some sort of discussion time between students of different ethnic backgrounds to verbalize concerns and experiences and be open to solutions and information," said one Saint Paul student. Indeed, for many if not most students, there is rarely an occasion when they are asked to reflect and seriously think about their feelings and attitudes toward people of different backgrounds. Another student lamented the fact that more opportunities did not materialize after a few promising starts. "A couple of times we pulled students together from different cliques and eth-

nic groups and had a big conversation...and I felt that it was really successful. I was looking forward to another session...but it never happened."

As with conflict resolution training, there is no shortage of model programs that can be adapted to the specific needs of the three school districts and, ideally, be made part of the curriculum. In South St. Paul, middle school students and teachers are working with materials developed by the Seattle-based REACH organization. In Saint Paul, the World of Difference curriculum has been used in some schools, and interest has been expressed in People For the American Way's new STAR program-(Students Talk About Race). STAR recruits and trains college-age volunteers to lead discussions about race and diversity in middle and high school classrooms. Once again, however, part of the challenge is to promote and organize these initiatives on a large enough scale so that they will become highly visible and a defining element of a school's social life. At the moment, too often teachers' individual efforts — in effect, mini-pilot programs — go largely unnoticed.

There is no substitute for on going, frequent opportunities where students and teachers can talk about issues of race, tolerance and intergroup relations.

Finally, if there is to be a true commitment to improving intergroup relations, then there must be a system for monitoring and measuring new programs and results. Currently, none of the three districts has the kind of system that effectively measures these important areas of school life and provides detailed information to the larger community that is necessary for an informed discussion of existing policies. It is insufficient, for example, for school districts merely to report annually the number of racial or other incidents that resulted in student suspension or dismissal from school and, at the staff level, other appropriate sanctions.

Moreover, it is clear from this report that there are many behaviors (and attitudes) other than reportable "incidents" that have a significant impact a school's social climate.

Consequently, a variety of research tools should be employed — interviews, focus groups, written questionnaires — to evaluate on a regular basis the schools' social climate and the experiences among staff and students regarding intergroup relations, tolerance and respect for others. Such information in the form of an annual "report card" to the community should be widely disseminated and publicized to ensure accountability and an informed public discussion. The progress or lack of progress reflected in the report card should be taken as seriously as the traditional reporting of a school district's academic test scores; not only are school climate and intergroup relations inextricably linked to academic performance, but in our increasingly diverse society teaching the values of tolerance and respect are more important than ever.

The program areas cited in this report represent only a beginning — albeit an ambitious one — toward a broad strategy for improving learning and building bridges of understanding, tolerance and respect.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

This six-month study began in Spring 1994 by People for the American Way with the help of school officials from all three districts.

This research includes interviews with 154 administrators, teachers, other school staff, parents, and community leaders.

In addition to the interviews, ten focus groups of high school students were conducted, eight in Saint Paul, one in Roseville, and one in South St. Paul. Students were selected with the help of school officials. Six of the focus groups were single race: two white, one African American, one Hispanic, one Hmong, one Vietnamese. Of the mixed groups, three were African American and white, and one was Native American, African American and Hispanic.

The questionnaires were prepared by People For the American Way, in consultation with school administrators and opinion survey organizations. The student questionnaire was completed by 1,576 students, most of whom were high school sophomores. The student questionnaires were distributed in classrooms and collected by teachers. The teacher questionnaires were distributed through the superintendent's office in each district. 591 teachers participated, representing 22 schools from all three districts.

For the student sample of 1,576 responses, there is a 3% margin of error. For the teacher sample of 591, the margin of error is 4%.

The data from the questionnaires was compiled by SDR Research in Atlanta. Question responses were cross-tabulated with race, gender, school district, and educational level of parents.

Inquiries about this study should directed to

Dr. Sanford Horwitt

People For the American Way,

2000 M Street NW,

Washington, DC, 20036

(202) 467-4999.

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

May 1994

RESULTS - COMPILED AUGUST 1994

1. Please choose three of the following programs that you think are important for your school to create and/or expand. Choose only the three that you think are the most important.

a. Community service programs..... 38%
b. Accelerated academic programs..... 46%
c. Computer training..... 44%
d. Citizenship education..... 17%
e. Programs designed to bring students from different backgrounds together... 35%
f. Multicultural education..... 30%
g. Conflict resolution and mediation..... 26%
h. Race relations programs..... 29%

Read the following statements. Put an "X" to indicate whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with the following statements.

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly	Don't Know
2. Racial and ethnic discrimination isn't really a serious problem today.	6%	16%	36%	39%	4%
3. Television and movies do a good job of portraying a positive image of people of color.	7%	31%	34%	20%	7%
4. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by Native American students.	7%	13%	17%	24%	38%
5. White students in my school are given many advantages over students of color, such as admission to certain programs and better teachers.	7%	12%	19%	50%	11%
6. It is generally best if people of each race keep to themselves.	9%	10%	19%	57%	5%
7. Teachers and administrators have higher expectations of white students than they do of other students.	12%	23%	19%	29%	18%

(Continued on next page)

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly	Don't Know
8. At my school, students separate into groups that have a lot of money and groups that don't have much money.	8%	29%	24%	25%	13%
9. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by Hispanic students.	4%	12%	21%	30%	32%
10. In my school, opportunities are open to all students equally, regardless of race, ethnicity or gender.	38%	30%	16%	9%	6%
11. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by white students.	6%	16%	24%	34%	19%
12. The United States has given too many special advantages to minority groups at the expense of white people.	20%	23%	18%	25%	13%
13. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by African-American students.	10%	17%	23%	28%	22%
14. There is nothing wrong with people of different races dating each other.	57%	19%	10%	11%	4%
15. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by Asian-American students.	6%	14%	24%	28%	28%

16. How would you rate relations between different ethnic and racial groups in your school?
    a. Great..... 7%
    b. Pretty good..... 52%
    c. Not so good..... 24%
    d. Terrible..... 6%
    e. I don't know..... 9%

17. How many close personal friendships do you have with people of other races or ethnic groups?
    a. None..... 13%
    b. One or two..... 28%
    c. Three or four..... 15%
    d. More than four..... 43%

18. How many close personal friendships do you have with people whose families have a lot more money than yours?

a. None..... 17%
b. One or two..... 35%
c. Three or four..... 19%
d. More than four..... 27%

19. How many close personal friendships do you have with people whose families have a lot less money than yours?

a. None..... 16%
b. One or two..... 30%
c. Three or four..... 17%
d. More than four..... 34%

20. How do you feel talking with and being around Asian-Americans?

a. Very comfortable..... 36%
b. Pretty comfortable..... 34%
c. A little uncomfortable..... 12%
d. Very uncomfortable..... 4%
e. I almost never interact with Asian-Americans..... 13%

21. How do you feel talking with and being around Native Americans?

a. Very comfortable..... 37%
b. Pretty comfortable..... 38%
c. A little uncomfortable..... 9%
d. Very uncomfortable..... 3%
e. I almost never interact with Native Americans..... 11%

22. How do you feel talking with and being around white Americans?

a. Very comfortable..... 61%
b. Pretty comfortable..... 27%
c. A little uncomfortable..... 7%
d. Very uncomfortable..... 3%
e. I almost never interact with white Americans..... 2%

23. How do you feel talking with and being around African-Americans?

a. Very comfortable..... 36%
b. Pretty comfortable..... 35%
c. A little uncomfortable..... 15%
d. Very uncomfortable..... 6%
e. I almost never interact with African-Americans..... 7%

24. How do you feel talking with and being around Hispanics?
    a. Very comfortable..... 38%
    b. Pretty comfortable..... 38%
    c. A little uncomfortable..... 10%
    d. Very uncomfortable..... 3%
    e. I almost never interact with Hispanics..... 10%

25. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for African-Americans?
    a. Mostly positive..... 17%
    b. Pretty positive..... 41%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 18%
    d. Mostly negative..... 8%
    e. Not sure..... 16%

26. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for Asian-Americans?
    a. Mostly positive..... 19%
    b. Pretty positive..... 40%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 17%
    d. Mostly negative..... 7%
    e. Not sure..... 16%

27. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for white Americans?
    a. Mostly positive..... 45%
    b. Pretty positive..... 38%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 6%
    d. Mostly negative..... 3%
    e. Not sure..... 7%

28. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for Native Americans?
    a. Mostly positive..... 17%
    b. Pretty positive..... 41%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 13%
    d. Mostly negative..... 5%
    e. Not sure..... 24%

29. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for Hispanics?
    a. Mostly positive..... 19%
    b. Pretty positive..... 42%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 14%
    d. Mostly negative..... 4%
    e. Not sure..... 20%

30. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for gays and lesbians?

a. Mostly positive 3%
b. Pretty positive 8%
c. A little more negative than positive 16%
d. Mostly negative 44%
e. Not sure 28%

31. How well do students from rich families and students from poor families get along at your school?

a. Very well 11%
b. Pretty well 30%
c. So-so 33%
d. Not at all 6%
e. I don't know 18%

32. How often do you think that discrimination against females happens at your school?

a. Very often 11%
b. Fairly often 27%
c. Not very often 36%
d. Never or almost never 12%
e. I don't know 12%

33. How often do you think that discrimination against males happens at your school?

a. Very often 6%
b. Fairly often 13%
c. Not very often 36%
d. Never or almost never 31%
e. I don't know 14%

34. How often do you think that discrimination against gays and lesbians happens at your school?

a. Very often 31%
b. Fairly often 19%
c. Not very often 12%
d. Never or almost never 7%
e. I don't know 30%

35. At your school, have you ever, because of your race, ethnicity or gender, experienced any of these types of harassing behaviors?

a. Called names or insulted by other students	Yes 54%	No 44%
b. Called names or insulted by teachers or administrators	Yes 16%	No 81%
c. Negative graffiti in school buildings	Yes 24%	No 72%
d. Vandalism of personal property	Yes 18%	No 78%
e. Threatening notes or phone calls	Yes 14%	No 83%
f. Verbal threats from other students	Yes 32%	No 65%
g. Physically attacked	Yes 14%	No 83%

36. At your school, do you know <u>other</u> students who have, because of their race, ethnicity or gender, experienced any of these types of harassing behaviors?

a. Called names or insulted by other students	Yes 80%	No 18%
b. Called names or insulted by teachers or administrators	Yes 34%	No 62%
c. Negative graffiti in school buildings	Yes 44%	No 53%
d. Vandalism of personal property	Yes 48%	No 48%
e. Threatening notes or phone calls	Yes 35%	No 62%
f. Verbal threats from other students	Yes 62%	No 35%
g. Physically attacked	Yes 50%	No 47%

37. At your school, have you ever, alone or with other students, hassled other students in any of the following ways, solely because of their race, ethnicity or gender?

a. Called names or insulted another student	Yes 32%	No 66%
b. Put up negative graffiti in school buildings	Yes 9%	No 88%
c. Vandalized personal property of another student	Yes 9%	No 88%
d. Sent threatening notes or made threatening phone calls to another student	Yes 9%	No 88%
e. Made verbal threats to another student	Yes 20%	No 77%
f. Physically attacked another student	Yes 11%	No 85%

38. Have you ever felt that teachers treated you unfairly because of your race?

Yes 27% No 71%

39. Have you ever felt that teachers treated you unfairly because of your gender?

Yes 39% No 59%

40. How well is your school doing to improve relations between students from different ethnic and racial groups?

a. Very well	10%
b. Pretty well	27%
c. So-so	29%
d. Not at all	14%
e. I don't know	18%

41. If you checked a, b, or c in the last question, please give an example of a class or an extra-curricular activity that does a good job of helping people get along with each other:

42. Please write one thing that you think that your school should do to improve relations between students from different ethnic, racial and class groups.

The following questions are for demographic purposes only:

43. Which of the following categories best describes your race?

5%	African-American	1%	Arab, Middle Eastern
13%	Asian/Pacific Islander	6%	Hispanic
1%	Native American, Eskimo	59%	White
6%	Mixed race (please specify)		
4%	Other (please specify)		

44. How old are you?

Under 15	15%
16	50%
17	24%
18+	6%

45. What town do you live in?

46. What school do you attend?

47. What grade are you in?

9th Grade	3%
10th Grade	63%
11th Grade	26%
12th Grade	3%

48. Male 46% Female 50%

49. Did your parents graduate from high school?

Both	71%
Mother	6%
Father	6%
Neither	13%

50. Did your parents graduate from college?

Both	27%
Mother	9%
Father	14%
Neither	44%

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

May 1994

RESULTS - COMPILED AUGUST 1994

1. Please rate each of the following goals as you see their importance to the school system.

	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority
a. basic literacy and math skills	92%	6%	1%
b. current affairs	43%	49%	7%
c. preparing students for college	45%	49%	5%
d. helping students get along with each other	73%	21%	4%
e. computer literacy	45%	46%	8%
f. vocational training	36%	48%	14%
g. encouraging students to become involved in community activities	31%	52%	15%
h. teaching mutual respect and tolerance	79%	16%	4%

Read the following statements. Put an "X" to indicate whether you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly.

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly	Don't Know
2. Racial and ethnic discrimination isn't really a serious problem today.	5%	17%	27%	50%	0%
3. White students in my school are given many advantages over students of color, such as admission to certain programs and better facilities.	3%	9%	12%	71%	5%
4. Teachers and administrators will tolerate poor behavior by white students.	4%	11%	14%	69%	1%
5. Schools must put more emphasis on multicultural education and diversity training.	25%	44%	22%	8%	1%
6. Teachers and administrators have higher expectations of white students than they do of other students.	6%	20%	21%	50%	4%

(Continued on next page)

	Agree Strongly	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Strongly	Don't Know
7. In my school, opportunities are open to all students equally, regardless of race, ethnicity or gender.	65%	22%	8%	2%	2%
8. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by African-American students.	10%	28%	23%	35%	2%
9. Schools need to focus more on basic academic skills.	49%	35%	12%	2%	1%
10. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by Asian-American students.	2%	11%	31%	48%	7%
11. The United States has given too many special advantages to people of color at the expense of white people.	4%	20%	29%	38%	7%
12. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by Native American students.	2%	9%	28%	43%	17%
13. Class, rather than race, is the greatest barrier between people.	22%	42%	16%	10%	8%
14. Teachers and administrators often tolerate poor behavior by Hispanic students.	3%	11%	30%	45%	11%

15. How would you rate relations between different ethnic and racial groups in your school district?

a. Great..... 12%
b. Fair..... 60%
c. Not so good..... 21%
d. Terrible..... 3%
e. I don't know..... 3%

16. How often do you come into contact with people of racial and ethnic backgrounds different than your own?

a. Very often..... 67%
b. Fairly often..... 23%
c. Not very often..... 9%
d. Never or almost never..... 1%
e. I don't know..... 0%

17. How do you feel interacting with Native Americans?
    a. Very comfortable..... 54%
    b. Pretty comfortable..... 32%
    c. A little uncomfortable..... 4%
    d. Very uncomfortable..... 1%
    e. I almost never interact with Native Americans..... 10%

18. How do you feel interacting with Asian-Americans?
    a. Very comfortable..... 67%
    b. Pretty comfortable..... 28%
    c. A little uncomfortable..... 2%
    d. Very uncomfortable..... 0%
    e. I almost never interact with Asian-Americans..... 2%

19. How do you feel interacting with African-Americans?
    a. Very comfortable..... 58%
    b. Pretty comfortable..... 32%
    c. A little uncomfortable..... 7%
    d. Very uncomfortable..... 1%
    e. I almost never interact with African-Americans..... 1%

20. How do you feel interacting with white Americans?
    a. Very comfortable..... 77%
    b. Pretty comfortable..... 21%
    c. A little uncomfortable..... 1%
    d. Very uncomfortable..... 0%
    e. I almost never interact with white Americans..... 0%

21. How do you feel interacting with Hispanics?
    a. Very comfortable..... 67%
    b. Pretty comfortable..... 27%
    c. A little uncomfortable..... 2%
    d. Very uncomfortable..... 0%
    e. I almost never interact with Hispanics..... 3%

22. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for Hispanics?
    a. Mostly positive..... 39%
    b. Pretty positive..... 41%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 7%
    d. Mostly negative..... 0%
    e. Not sure..... 11%

23. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for African-Americans?
    a. Mostly positive..... 34%
    b. Pretty positive..... 41%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 17%
    d. Mostly negative..... 3%
    e. Not sure..... 4%

24. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for white Americans?
    a. Mostly positive..... 53%
    b. Pretty positive..... 40%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 3%
    d. Mostly negative..... 1%
    e. Not sure..... 1%

25. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for Asian-Americans?
    a. Mostly positive..... 41%
    b. Pretty positive..... 46%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 7%
    d. Mostly negative..... 1%
    e. Not sure..... 4%

26. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for Native Americans?
    a. Mostly positive..... 32%
    b. Pretty positive..... 41%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 8%
    d. Mostly negative..... 1%
    e. Not sure..... 17%

27. In general, how would you describe your school's environment for gays and lesbians?
    a. Mostly positive..... 7%
    b. Pretty positive..... 11%
    c. A little more negative than positive..... 16%
    d. Mostly negative..... 23%
    e. Not sure..... 41%

28. To the extent that there are divisions or tensions among students, are they:
    a. mainly on racial lines?..... 23%
    b. mainly on class lines?..... 10%
    c. equally on both?..... 26%
    d. not really on either?..... 21%
    e. I don't know..... 17%

29. To what extent do you think that racial harassment of students exists at y
   a. Very great extent..... 2%
   b. Great extent..... 13%
   c. Somewhat..... 51%
   d. Very little..... 25%
   e. Almost never..... 7%

30. To what extent do you think that racial harassment of staff exists at your school?
   a. Very great extent..... 1%
   b. Great extent..... 5%
   c. Somewhat..... 17%
   d. Very little..... 32%
   e. Almost never..... 45%

31. To what extent do you think that gender discrimination towards students exists at your school?
   a. Very great extent..... 2%
   b. Great extent..... 8%
   c. Somewhat..... 35%
   d. Very little..... 33%
   e. Almost never..... 20%

32. To what extent do you think that discrimination based on class or income level exists at your school?
   a. Very great extent..... 3%
   b. Great extent..... 10%
   c. Somewhat..... 36%
   d. Very little..... 32%
   e. Almost never..... 18%

33. To what extent do you think that gender discrimination towards staff exists at your school?
   a. Very great extent..... 3%
   b. Great extent..... 8%
   c. Somewhat..... 28%
   d. Very little..... 28%
   e. Almost never..... 31%

34. Do you believe that there are too few students of color in advanced placement and accelerated classes? Yes 32% No 29% Not sure 35%
   Please explain your answer:

35. At your school, have you ever, because of your race, ethnicity or gender, experienced any of these types of harassing behaviors?

a. Negative remarks by students	Yes 52%	No 46%
b. Negative remarks by teachers or administrators	Yes 21%	No 76%
c. Derogatory graffiti in school buildings	Yes 27%	No 69%
d. Vandalism of personal property	Yes 28%	No 69%
e. Threatening notes or phone calls	Yes 12%	No 83%
f. Verbal threats from students	Yes 35%	No 62%
g. Physical attacks	Yes 9%	No 87%

36. Do you know students at your school who have, because of their race, ethnicity or gender, experienced any of these types of harassing behaviors?

a. Negative remarks by students	Yes 87%	No 11%
b. Negative remarks by teachers or administrators	Yes 30%	No 64%
c. Derogatory graffiti in school buildings	Yes 44%	No 50%
d. Vandalism of personal property	Yes 42%	No 52%
e. Threatening notes or phone calls	Yes 26%	No 66%
f. Verbal threats from students	Yes 69%	No 28%
g. Physical attacks	Yes 54%	No 40%

37. If you answered "yes" to any parts of last two questions:
How did you handle the situation(s):

a. ignored	10%
b. reported it to an administrator	54%
c. confronted the parties involved	76%
d. other response	23%

(please explain)

38. How often do you think that members of your ethnic or racial background experience the following types of behavior at school:

	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
a. Negative remarks by students	13%	41%	31%	12%
b. Negative remarks by teachers or administrators	2%	13%	44%	34%
c. Derogatory graffiti in school buildings	4%	20%	40%	30%
d. Vandalism of personal property	3%	27%	40%	23%
e. Threatening notes or phone calls	1%	15%	47%	29%
f. Threats from students	7%	30%	35%	22%

39. Have you ever had trouble relating to a student because of differences of race or of ethnic origin? Yes 34% No 65%

40. Have you ever had trouble relating to a co-worker because of differences of race or of ethnic origin? Yes 13% No 87%

41. Rate the following programs and policies as to how effective you think that they would be in improving intergroup relations in your school.

	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not very Helpful	A waste of time
a. Promoting school-based community service programs.	30%	52%	13%	5%
b. Classes specifically designed to discuss issues of bias and prejudice.	30%	46%	18%	6%
c. Access to materials that would help teachers discuss race relations in currently offered classes.	29%	48%	19%	3%
d. Conflict resolution training.	50%	37%	9%	3%
e. Exchange opportunities between students of different backgrounds.	39%	42%	13%	4%
f. State or federally mandated integration.	5%	20%	43%	30%
g. Classes that teach students about other cultures.	47%	43%	7%	2%

42. For which of the following activities would you be willing to give up an hour of class time each month?

a. School-based community service programs..... 44%
b. Classes specifically designed to discuss issues of bias and prejudice..... 44%
c. Conflict resolution training..... 58%
d. Exchange opportunities between students of different backgrounds..... 42%
e. Classes that teach students about other cultures..... 56%
f. None of the above..... 8%
g. Other..... 3%
(please specify)

43. Do you have any additional suggestions on programs or policies that you would like to see implemented in your school in order to improve intergroup relations?

The following questions are for demographic purposes only.

44. Male 38% Female 52%

45. Your age is:

18-24	2%
25-34	16%
35-44	21%
45-54	34%
55-64	16%
65 and over	0%

46. At what school do you work?

St. Paul	
Agape	1%
Central HS	6%
Como Park HS	6%
Harding HS	4%
Highland Park HS	4%
Humboldt HS	7%
Johnson HS	6%
Open School	1%
Cleveland MS	3%
Hazel Park MS	6%
Highland Park MS	3%
Murray JH	3%
Homecroft	2%
Horace Mann	3%
Benjamin Mays	2%
Prosperity Heights	2%
Webster	5%
South St. Paul	
South St. Paul HS	14%
Roseville	
Roseville HS	7%
Little Canada	5%
Edgeton	4%
RAMS	5%

47. How long have you been at your current school?

1-2 yrs.	18%
3-5 yrs.	18%
6-7 yrs.	8%
8-10 yrs.	12%
11-14 yrs.	9%
15-20 yrs.	8%
20+ yrs.	11%

48. Which of the following categories best describes your race?

3%	African-American	0%	Arab, Middle Eastern
1%	Asian/Pacific Islander	1%	Hispanic
1%	Native American, Eskimo	77%	White
2%	Mixed race (please specify)		
2%	Other (please specify)		

Publications

PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY

Your Voice Against Intolerance

Censorship In the Schools

PUBLICATIONS

Attacks on the Freedom to Learn, 1993-1994, 232 pp. **$11.95/13.95**
Documents state-by-state challenges to instructional materials in public schools.

The Freedom to Learn Action Kit, 1993, kit **$7.95/9.95**
Helps activists respond to censorship attempts. Includes *Citizen's Guide* (see below).

Protecting the Freedom to Learn: A Citizen's Guide, 1989, 56 pp. **$4.95/5.95**
Guidelines for combatting censorship efforts.

VIDEOTAPES (VHS)

Redondo Beach: A Stand Against Censorship, 1990, 14:20 mins. **$15.00/20.00**
Documentary on a community's successful resistance to school censorship.

Censorship in Our Schools: Hawkins County, TN, 1987, 18:50 mins. **$15.00/20.00**
Documentary on community battle over challenge to reading materials. ***3/4" version available for $30.00***

Censorship In the Arts

PUBLICATIONS

Artistic Freedom Under Attack, Volume II, 1994, 232 pp. **$11.95/13.95**
Documents state-by-state challenges to artistic expression in 1992 and 1993.

Tucson Talks: A Search For Common Ground, 1994, 40 pp. **$5.95/6.95**
Examines a recent censorship case and how **People For the American Way's artsave project** worked with a local community exposing intolerance and building free expression.

Protecting Artists and Their Work, 1993, 75 pp. **$5.95/6.95**
A summary of federal and state laws protecting art and artists.

artsave Technical Assistance Kit, 1992, kit. **$4.95/5.95**
Guide to battling art censorship.

When two prices are listed, the first price is for People For members.

Church / State

PUBLICATIONS

Twelve Rules for Mixing Religion and Politics, 1994. **$5.95/6.95**
Guidelines for appropriate involvement of religion in politics.

Religious Right

PUBLICATIONS

Winning Through Reason, Not Fear:
Meeting the Challenge of the Religious Right, 1994, 50 pp. **$8.95**
Lessons of a national survey of public attitudes toward the Religious Right and the values debate.

Right-Wing Watch, monthly newsletter. **$15.00/year**
Tracks political activities of the radical right. ***(10 issues)***

Hostile Climate: A State-By-State Report on Anti-Gay Activity, 1993, 60 pp. **$6.95**
Documents anti-gay incidents nationwide in legislative, court, and ballot arenas.

The San Diego Model: A Community Battles the Religious Right, 1993, 63 pp. **$5.95/6.95**
A model and primer on community organizing to counter the Religious Right.

How to Win:
A Practical Guide for Defeating the Radical Right in Your Community, 1994, 250 pp. **$22.95/25.95**
Comprehensive guide to issues and organizations; tactics for resisting radical right.

Teaching Fear: The Religious Right's Campaign Against Sexuality Education, 1994, 26 pp. **$5.95/6.95**
Traces the history of Religious Right opposition to sexuality education, identifies the groups and individuals leading the charge, describes controversies in local school districts, and summarizes current data on the effectiveness of sexuality education curricula.

VIDEOTAPES (VHS)

The Religious Right: In Their Own Words, 1993, 8 mins. **$15.00/25.00**
Documents extreme rhetoric of major religious right leaders.

Youth and Tolerance

PUBLICATIONS

Invisible Walls: A Study of Racial Division and the Challenge of Building Bridges of Understanding in the Saint Paul, MN Area Public Schools, 1994, 48 pp. **$6.95/7.95**
In-depth survey of students' and teachers' attitudes toward race relations, and local pilot program.

STAR Brochure (Students Talk About Race). **One copy free**
Describes STAR program; college students lead high school students in discussions on diversity.

First Vote Brochure, 1993. **One copy free**
Describes citizenship/voter registration program for high school students.

First Vote Teaching Unit, 1993, 16 pp. **$3.00**
Democracy and citizenship curriculum companion to *First Vote Video*.

Democracy's Next Generation: A Study of Youth and Teachers, 1989, 204 pp. **$9.95/11.95**
Explores youth attitudes and values on citizenship, civic participation, politics and voting.

Democracy's Next Generation II:
A Study of American Youth on Race, 1992, 190 pp. **$9.95/11.95**
Examines race relations and racial divisions among young people.

Hate in the Ivory Tower:
A Survey of Intolerance on College Campuses and Academia's Response, 1991, 80 pp. ... **$8.95/10.95**
Documents growth of intolerant behavior on campuses and provides guidelines for response.

VIDEOTAPES (VHS)

STAR: A New Dialogue About Diversity, 1993, 8 mins. **$15.00/25.00**
Classroom footage showing STAR race relations program in action.

First Vote, 1990, 17:06 mins. **$95.00**
Part of First Vote high school program on citizenship and voting.

General

PUBLICATIONS

Congressional Handbook (1993-1994) **$6.95**
Lists Members of Congress, committee assignments, and addresses and phone numbers. *($6.50 each for orders of 10 or more)*

People for the American Way/Action Fund Membership Brochure ..... **One copy free**
An overview of People For's programs, includes return card for membership.

COMMEMORATIVE ART BY ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG

The Spirit of Liberty
Creative tribute on occasion of People For's tenth anniversary.
Limited edition signed lithographs **$7,500**
Limited edition poster signed by the artist **$155**
Poster **$35**

This list does not include research papers on a variety of topics.
When two prices are listed, the first price is for People For members.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE, ZIP

DAYTIME TELEPHONE NUMBER:

All publication orders must be prepaid.
Sorry, no CODs.

Please make check payable to:
PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY,
2000 M Street, NW, Suite 400, Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 467-4999.

Thank you for your order!

Membership Number: _____

PUBLICATION NAME	QTY.	COST/EA.	AMOUNT

Revised November 1994

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED

Board of Directors

Dr. David Ramage, Jr., *Chairman*
Arthur J. Kropp, *President*
Frieda King, *Secretary*
John Klemick, *Treasurer*
Michael Hudson, *General Counsel*

David E. Altschul
James A. Autry
Alec Baldwin
Marilyn Bergman
The Reverend Dr. Charles Bergstrom
Barbara Bluhm
Father Robert J. Brooks
Blair Brown
Bob Burkett
Don Cameron
Julius L. Chambers
Arthur Chotin
Susan Claassen
Bertis E. Downs, IV, Esq.
Father Robert Drinan
Timothy Dyk, Esq.
James O. Gibson
Judy Goldenberg
Douglas E. Goldman, M.D.
Andrew Heiskell
Judith N. Herr
Norton Herrick
Adelaide Hixon
The Honorable Barbara Jordan
Harry Kahn
Elizabeth Kenny Lack
Norman Lear
Katharine Mountcastle
Albert R. Murray, Jr., Esq.
Anthony T. Podesta
Thomas P. Pollock
David S. Rose
Joshua Sapan
Rabbi David Saperstein
The Reverend William F. Schulz
Carole Shields
Clyde (Ev) Shorey
Paul Sperry
The Reverend Charles R. Stith
Margery Tabankin
Cynthia Ann Telles, Ph.D.
Kathleen Turner
Ruth B. Usem
Ira D. Wallach
Geraldine Day Zurn

November 1994

Citizen Participation Project Director
Sanford D. Horwitt

Citizen Participation Project Associate Director
Margo Fox

Researcher
Anne-Marie Bairstow

Editor
Virginia Witt

Design/Production
Kate McConnell
Patti Spayd

"That is just how it is, and I don't thi

ver going to change."

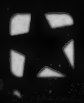
"It is pretty tough for outsiders to come in."

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

2000 M Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC 20036

Contact:
Dr. Sanford Horwitt
202-467-4999

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



PEOPLE FOR
THE AMERICAN WAY

Your Voice Against Intolerance

2000 M Street, NW
Suite 400
Washington, DC
20036
202-467-4999

BEST COPY AVAILABLE